

Message Text

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 MEXICO 00679 01 OF 02 171801Z

44

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /011 W

----- 024403

R 162320Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY MEXICO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2443

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 1 OF 2 MEXICO 0679

STADIS//////////

FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY ROGERS FROM AMBASSADOR JOVA

E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: AMGT

SUBJECT: REORGANIZATION OF ARA

1. I CAN FULLY APPRECIATE YOUR DESIRE TO REFORGE ARA INTO A MORE EFFECTIVE INSTRUMENT FOR THE PERCEPTION AND ANALYSIS OF MAJOR PROBLEMS AND TO WORK TOWARD THEIR SOLUTION. I HAVE CONSULTED WITH THE STATE MEMBERS OF MY COUNTRY TEAM AND HOPE THAT OUR COMMENTS ON THIS SUBJECT WILL BE HELPFUL.

2. MANY OF US HAVE LIVED THROUGH VARIOUS MANIFESTATIONS OF THE DESK/COUNTRY OFFICER CONCEPT. SOME YEARS AGO, THE "DESK OFFICER" WAS A BRIGHT FSO-5 WHO ALMOST RULED SUPREME IN THE DEPARTMENT OVER "HIS COUNTRY"; HE WAS EXPECTED TO KNOW ALL ABOUT THE COUNTRY AND TO REPRESENT U.S. BILATERAL INTERESTS IN THE COUNTRY, IN HIS CONTACT WITH OTHER AREAS OF THE DEPARTMENT AND OTHER AGENCIES. IN THE MID-60'S, DEPARTMENT PRINCIPALS PERCEIVED A NEED FOR A MORE SCENIOR COUNTRY OFFICER WHO MIGHT, IN AN AUTHORITATIVE WAY, RESPOND TO OTHER SENIOR OFFICIALS ON QUESTIONS RELATING TO HIS COUNTRY OR COUNTRIES; THIS IDEA GREW INTO THE CONCEPT OF ELIMINATING REGIONAL OFFICE DIRECTORS AND ELEVATING THE DESK OFFICER TO "COUNTRY DIRECTOR" AS A "COUNTER-AMBASSADOR", CORRESPONDING IN WASHINGTON TO THE AMBASSADOR AT POST. IN PRACTICE, THE CONCEPT NEVER TOOK

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 MEXICO 00679 01 OF 02 171801Z

HOLD FOR VARIOUS REASONS, INCLUDING THE INCREASE IN THE

NUMBER OF DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARIES, AS THESE DEPUTIES CAME TO FULFILL MUCH THE SAME FUNCTION(WITH GREATER AUTHORITY, OF COURSE) AS THE OFFICE DIRECTORS IN THE OLD DAYS OF THE FSO-5 DESK OFFICER. THE POINT OF THIS RECITAL IS THAT, IN MY VIEW, THE COUNTRY/DESK FUNCTION PERSISTS BECAUSE IT IS AN ESSENTIAL COORDINATING LINK WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT AND BETWEEN THE DEPARTMENT AND THE FIELD REGARDLESS OF THE RANK OF THE FUNCTION.

3. THE ESSENCE OF THE COUNTRY/DESK FUNCTION (BESIDES THE LINKAGE MENTIONED ABOVE) LIES IN THE NEED FOR AN INFORMED UNIT CAPABLE OF REPRESENTAING AND COORDINATING U.S. BILATERAL INTERESTS IN A GIVEN COUNTRY, IN WASHINGTON IN THE INTRA-AND INTER-DEPARTMENTAL ARENAS VIS-A-VIS OTHER OFFICERS OR AGENCIES WITH OTHER INTERESTS AND NO RESPONSIBILITY FOR BILATERAL RELATIONS. IF THE COUNTRY DESK STRUCTURE IS WEAKENED EXCESSIVELY, WHILE THE NEED FOR THE FUNCTION REMAINS, PERFORMANCE AND EVEN EFFECTIVE AUTHORITY WILL INEVITABLY SHIFT ELSEWHERE IN THE BUEREAU OR EVEN OUTSIDE IT. WE SHOULD BEWARE OF OVERLOADING THE DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARIES WITH "DESK OFFICER" TASKS-- SOMETIMES ROUTINE BUT NEVERTHELESS VIATAL--OR, CONVERSELY, OF OVERBURDENING RELATIVELY JUNIOR OFFICERS REMAINING AT THE COUNTRY DESK LEVEL WITH RESPONSIBILITY THEY ARE NOT YET READY TO ASSUME. I WILL NOT LABOR THE POINT FURTHER: I GATHER FROM THE LAST "HIGHLIGHTS" CABLE THAT OTHER POSTS HAVE COMMENTED ON THIS SUBJECT.

4. WHILE I AGREE THAT OVER-CONCENTRATION ON MINUTIA IS BAD, I CANNOT FULLY AGREE WITH THE COMMENT ON "COMPULSIVE AND UNNECESSARY INTEREST IN THE INTERNAL DEVELOPMENTS OF FOREIGN NATIONS." INTERNAL DEVELOPMENTS OF TODAY ARE REFLECTED IN THE EXTERNAL PROBLEMS OF TOMORROW, AND THEY CAN BE SAFELY IGNORED ONLY WHILE EVERYTHING IN A GIVEN COUNTRY IS GOING WELL, FROM OUR POINT OF VIEW. UNFORTUNATELY, THIS HAPPY SITUATION SELDOM PREVAILS FOR LONG, AT LEAST IN THIS HEMISPHERE.

5. SIMILARLY, "CLIENTITIS", IF OVERDONE, IS REPRESENTED BY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 03 MEXICO 00679 01 OF 02 171801Z

HENSIBLE. ON THE OTHER HAND, IT HAS BEEN MY EXPERIENCE THAT IF THE DESK OFFICER DOES NOT REPRESENT--AND SOMETIMES DEFEND AND DO BATTLE FOR--THE U.S. BILATERAL INTERESTS IN THE COUNTRY OR COUNTRIES FOR WHICH HE IS RESPONSIBLE, NO ONE ELSE WILL.

6. IN REORGANIZING, LET US NOT FORGET THE NECESSARY BALANCE WHICH MUST EXIST BETWEEN THE NEW ARA-ANNOUNCED

EMPHASIS ON BILATERALISM VERSUS THE REGIONAL AND
FUNCTIONAL APPROACH.

7. THE NEED FOR STRESS ON THE ACTIVITIES MENTIONED IN
PARA 5 OF REFTEL SEEMED TO US A POINT WELL TAKEN; WE
BELIEVE SUCH STRESS CAN AND SHOULD BE APPLIED, WHATEVER
ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE MAY EMERGE OR, INDEED, UNDER
THE PRESENT ONE. THIS MAY BOIL DOWN TO THE PERENNIAL,
ADMITTEDLY DIFFICULT PROBLEM OF ESTABLISHING PRIORITIES.

8. WE BELIEVE OUTSIDE TRAINER/CONSULTANTS WOULD BE
USEFUL IN HELPING PERMANENT STAFFERS TO GAIN NEW INSIGHT
AND PERSPECTIVE ON PROBLEMS TO WHICH THEY HAVE, PERHAPS,
BEEN TOO CLOSE TOO LONG. AT THE SAME TIME, IT SHOULD BE
RECOGNIZED THAT THIS TRAINING/CONSULTATION PROCESS IS
TWO-WAY STREET AND THAT IT TAKES OUTSIDERS SOME TIME TO
APPRECIATE THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN BEING A PARTICIPANT
AND A SPECTATOR IN THE FOREIGN POLICY PROCESS.

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 MEXICO 00679 02 OF 02 171803Z

44

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /011 W
----- 024446
R 170050Z JAN 76
FM AMEMBASSY MEXICO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2444

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 2 OF 2 MEXICO 0679

STADIS//////////

FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY ROGERS FROM AMBASSADOR JOVA

9. WE STRONGLY SUPPORT THE IDEA OF DEVOTING MORE
RESOURCES TO TWO-WAY TRAVEL BETWEEN WASHINGTON AND THE
FIELD. REGARDLESS OF THE FORM THE REORGANIZATION TAKES,
WE WOULD HOPE THAT A GREATER EFFORT MIGHT BE MADE BY
SENIOR OFFICIALS IN THE BUREAU TO FACILITATE THE CON-
SULTATION PROCESS WHEN EMBASSY OFFICERS ARE IN WASH-
INGTON. PERHAPS VISITNG EMBOFFS MIGHT BE INVITED TO

BUREAU STAFF MEETINGS. PERHAPS THE OLD CUSTOM OF INVITING VISITING AMBASSADORS TO THE SECRETARY'S STAFF MEETING MIGHT BE REINSTATED.

10. MOST FSO'S PREFER GEOGRAPHIC BUREAU ASSIGNMENTS OVER ALL OTHERS; THEY FEEL THAT THE ACTION, THE GLAMOUR, AND THE APPEAL OF OPERATIONAL AND CONCEPTUAL DIPLOMACY IS TO BE FOUND THERE(NOT TO MENTION THE PERCEIVED ADVANTAGES IN TERMS OF ONWARD ASSIGNMENTS). IN MOVING TOWARD A MORE FUNCTIONALIZED BUREAU, I HOPE THAT ARA MAY NOT BECOME AS SEXLESS AND UNAPPEALING AS SOME FUNCTIONAL BUREAUS ARE PERCEIVED, RIGHTLY OR WRONGLY, BY MANY OFFICERS.

11. WE IN MEXICO ARE FORTUNATE IN RECEIVING STRONG SUPPORT FROM THE COUNTRY DESK, AND COMMUNICATION WITH THE BUREAU IN GENERAL HAS IMPROVED OVER THE PAST YEAR, E.G., THROUGH THE WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS CABLE AND OTHER CHANNELS.

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 MEXICO 00679 02 OF 02 171803Z

12. IN THE END, OF COURSE, THE SPECIFICS OF REORGANIZATION MUST BE DECIDED IN WASHINGTON, THOUGH I HOPE THAT THE FOREGOING COMMENTS MAY BE USEFUL IN ARRIVING AT THOSE SPECIFICS. OUR PRIMARY INTEREST, I THINK, IS THAT WHEN WE CALL WASHINGTON WE FIND SOMEONE ON THE OTHER END OF THE LINE WHO CAN HELP US WITH THE SORT OF SUPPORT AND GUIDANCE ONLY WASHINGTON CAN PROVIDE-- SOMEONE WHO NEITHER WISHES NOR IS ABLE TO PASS THE BUCK. INCIDENTALLY, DESPITE THE RECOGNIZED VALUE OF THE "GRASS ROOTS" PROGRAM, WITH WHICH I AGREE ENTIRELY, CAN THIS BE SO SCHEDULED AS NOT TO LEAVE THE STORE UNTENDED? JOVA

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 16 JAN 1976
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: buchant0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976MEXICO00679
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760018-1120
From: MEXICO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760150/aaaabses.tel
Line Count: 206
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: STADIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: STADIS
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: buchant0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 20 JUL 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <20 JUL 2004 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <28 OCT 2004 by buchant0>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: REORGANIZATION OF ARA
TAGS: AMGT
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006